Certificate of Award

THIS CERTIFIES THAT

[redacted]

as Valedictorian of the Class of 1972

[redacted]

has been awarded a complimentary subscription to the Reader's Digest *for one year, beginning with the current issue. In the belief that vital contact with the living, quickening thought of our day is essential to continuing education, this subscription is presented not only in recognition of past accomplishment, but in anticipation of unusual achievement to come.*

GIVEN AT PLEASANTVILLE, N.Y., BY THE READER'S DIGEST ASSOCIATION

David Wallace

Members of the administration, fellow ~~students~~ Graduates, Faculty, Friends-- and Parents,

This graduating class before you tonight is very special. There are a number of things which point this out-- 1972 is a leap year, 1972 is the year in which many of us will help decide who the next President is going to be, and 1972, thanks to the current President, is the beginning of the end of the Cold War. Above all this, however, we are unusual in the fact that our chances for success in today's world are smaller than for any preceding class.

Graduation from high school no longer can be considered a goal, as it once was. We can no more expect a job tomorrow than can the nine million full- and part-time students already in America's colleges and universities. What are we supposed to do when we see college graduates working as delivery boys--and many with Ph. D.'s sitting in unemployment lines? Some of us will join the college masses next year, others will attempt to battle society now. Whatever we do, quick

it better be with a definite purpose in mind, for those who are working towards a goal are the ones who will succeed.

In order for us to compete, we must aim higher than ever. History has proven the value of high goals. Columbus set out to circle the globe, and he opened the door to America. He didn't make it around the world, but America would have waited longer had he not tried. Ponce de Leon never found his Fountain of Youth, but while looking for it he opened up a new frontier.

In our time, the launching of Sputnik by Russia created for America the goal of being first to the stars. This continuing struggle has already produced manned missions to the moon. The success of the United States as a nation has hinged on the built-in goal of "keeping up with the Joneses". We all want to do at least as well as our neighbor, and this aspect of capitalism gives each of us something to strive for.

To succeed, it is important while striving to be headed in the right direction. For example, we might take a college student in pre-law or pre-medicine. His family and community look from afar with pride to see a promising young doctor or lawyer about to make a substantial sum of money. In reality, he might have no wish to be in college, but rather had hoped to become a mechanic or technician. He has lost his goal and replaced it with that of his parents. Motivation will be hard to come by, and success even harder.

To be a success, one must follow his own goal. That may be anything from being a top-notch salesman to becoming a first-rate lumberjack. Today's problem is that we find an overabundance of kids lost in college someplace, when in their hearts and souls they'd rather be gapping sparkplugs-or fighting fires. Any mountain climber will tell you-- you can't get to the top of Mt. Everest if you start at the foot of Mt. Shasta!

It really doesn't matter what we choose to do with our lives. What matters is that we decide, right now, that someday-each of us is going to be the best in his own field. We have to realize that in order to succeed in the cutthroat world, our goals must be impossibly high. They should be beyond imaginable reach, for once we accomplish them, purpose, and productiveness are lost. We must always maintain high goals to continue our competitiveness.

(very short pause)

And should we never achieve our goals, comfort will be gained in the knowledge that the farther we reach, the more leverage we have to pull ourselves ahead.

Thank you
Very Much.